

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In response to the Office Action dated December 3, 2003, claims 1-8, 16, 18 and 19 are canceled. Claims 9-15 and 17 are now active in this application. No new matter has been added.

REJECTION OF CLAIMS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102 AND § 103

Claims 1-3, 5, 8 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chapman et al. (USPN 6,522,421) in view of Applicants Admitted Prior Art.

Claims 4, 6, 18 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chapman et al. (USPN 6,522,421) in view of Applicants Admitted Prior Art, as applied to claim 1, and further in view of Ikenoue et al. (USPN 5,671,277).

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chapman et al. (USPN 6,522,421) in view of Applicants Admitted Prior Art, as applied to claim 1, and further in view of Mahoney et al. (USPN 5,659,639).

The indication that claims 9-15 and 17 are allowable is acknowledged and appreciated.

To expedite prosecution, claims 1-8, 16, 18 and 19 are cancelled, leaving only claims 9-15 and 17 pending in this application.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, it is urged that the application, as now amended, is in condition for allowance. Entry of the amendment and favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended, are respectfully requested. If there are any outstanding issues that might be resolved

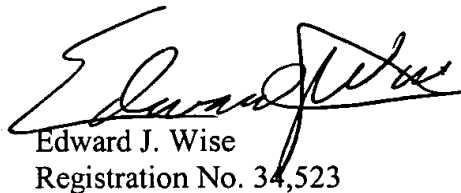
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by an interview or an Examiner's amendment, Examiner is requested to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number shown below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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